A

SERMON

Preach'd at the
Pariſh-Church of
St. *James's*, *Weſtminſter*,
On the 21*ſt* of *May*, 1702.

At the Funeral of

Mr. John Cooper,

A Conſtable, who was barbarouſly Murther'd at *May*-Fair, in the Execution of his Office, in Suppreſſing the publick Diſorders there.

By *JOSIAH WOODWARD*, D.D.
Miniſter of *Popler*.

Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Juſtices of the Peace, High-Conſtables, and other Officers and Gentlemen that heard it.

LONDON,
Printed by *Joſ. Downing*: And are to be Sold by *D. Brown*, at the *Black-Swan* and *Bible* without *Temple Bar*; and *E. Evans*, near the *Blue Boot* in *Piccadilly*, 1702.

W. Musgrave.

To the Justices of the Peace, High-Constables, and other Officers, and Gentlemen, at whose Request the following Sermon was made Publick.

THE short Warning given me to Preach this Sermon, and the many Imperfections which usually attend hasty Productions, might have been my just Excuse, Gentlemen, had I persisted to deny your Importunities for the Publishing of it. But I must own, that you perfectly silenced all Denial, when you press'd it for the Sake of the Glory of God, in the farther Punishment of Vice. For this is a Consideration that ought to divest us of all private Regards; and to constrain us, according to the Example of our Honoured Brother deceased, to sacrifice our A L L for it; in which Glorious Steps of his, I pray God incline us all to tread.

He, Gentlemen, *to his Eternal Honour, not only underwent the* Contradictions *of Sinners, but their cruel* Outrages; *and ſealed a Teſtimony of his faithful Zeal for his* Great Maſter's *Intereſts with his Blood. And by what he ſuffered, this whole Nation cannot but ſee, That 'tis high Time for* Magiſtrates *to draw thoſe* Swords *wherewith God has girded them, againſt exorbitant* Vice *and* Impiety: *For ſhould* Irreligion *be ſuffered to grow a little longer, till it has brought the* Miniſters of Juſtice *to as little Regard, as it has the* Miniſters of Religion *among theſe Profligates, our Iniquities would ſurpaſs all* Humane Remedies, *and then we are a* loſt Nation.

May therefore the Love of God *and of* Civil Government *conſtrain Her Majeſty's* Juſtices of the Peace *to encourage and protect all ſuch well-diſpoſed Perſons as, in Duty to* God *and the* Queen, *bring them Informations againſt* Vice *and* Prophaneneſs; *and to ſupport ſuch* Officers *as endeavour to acquit their Conſciences in the juſt Puniſhment of thoſe, who violate the Laws of God and Man. For if once* Lawleſs Perſons *get*

ſuch

such an Ascendant, *as to be able to resist and outrage our* Civil Officers *in the just Execution of their* Offices; *All* Civil Government *is but a ludicrous Pageant, the* Sacred Majesty *of* Princes *but as a vile Foot-Ball under the Kick and Insult of every common Foot, and the* Laws *of the Land (those essential Bands of the* Publick Good) *no better than a mere* Maygame, *as in the barbarous Riot before us.*

It is therefore of the highest Importance to us, That our most Illustrious QUEEN *has not only in general made a most Honourable Effort against Impiety and Immorality by Her Majesty's Pious* Proclamation, *but has particularly resented this insolent Violation of it. And since many of Her Majesty's* Justices *and* Officers *of the Peace are fully determined to observe Her Royal Pleasure herein, and do most honourably quicken their* Courage, *and resolve to double their* Diligence, *by the sad Instance of our* martyred Brother; *we hope it may be an auspicious Presage, that both the* English Throne *and* Nation *will be established by* Righteousness, *to the Glory*

of

of Almighty God, *the Immortal Renown of our* most Gracious Queen, *and to the great Happiness of these* Nations *under Her Majesty's Pious Administration: Which is the earnest Prayer of,*

Gentlemen,

Your Affectionate Humble Servant

Josiah Woodward.

A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Funeral of

Mr. JOHN COOPER.

Pſal. 106. Ver. 30.

Then ſtood up Phinehas and executed Judgment, and ſo the Plague was ſtayed.

THE *Royal Pſalmiſt* is here recounting the moſt remarkable *Calamities* and *Deliverances* of the People of *Iſrael* in the Ages that were paſt; in a way of *Devotion* to God, and

Admonition to Men: Shewing from their Hiſtory, that as often as they ſinned and rebelled againſt God, they were *plagued* and brought low: And that as ſoon as they reformed and return'd to God, they became *Great* and *Happy*. And here, for the Encouragement of ſincere Piety and Zeal for God, he ſhews that ſometimes the eminent *Devotion* and ſeaſonable *Juſtice* of one *ſingle Man* had been a Means of ſtopping *publick Plagues*, and of reſcuing a whole Nation from the Strokes of *Divine Vengeance*.

This is exemplified in the Text in the Inſtance of *Phinehas*, one of the Magiſtrates of *Iſrael*, who, in Zeal for God, did a moſt *Heroic* piece of Juſtice upon a couple of Perſons of high Quality, but of notorious Lewd-

neſs,

neſs, as we read (*Numb.* 25. 6.) where we have a full Account of the Matter of Fact, which was briefly this.

When *Balaam* could bring no *Enchantment* to bear againſt the People of *Iſrael*, as he willingly would, for the ſake of *Balak's Reward*; he at laſt thought of another Device to do them Miſchief, which may be call'd a ſort of an *Enchantment* too; namely, to entice the Men of *Iſrael* to Uncleanneſs by the *Midianitiſh Women*, which ſoon took effect, and prevailed very far; inſomuch, that God ſent the Peſtilence upon the *Iſraelites*, which deſtroyed *Four and Twenty Thouſand* of them. And now this dreadful *Plague* brought the Congregation of *Iſrael* to a ſenſe of their Sin, and they appoint a

ſolemn Faſt, and unite their earneſt Prayers to God to turn away his heavy Diſpleaſure. But here, alas! there appeared the moſt impudent and daring Inſtance of Vice that we any where read of. For at this very time, *Zimri* a Prince of *Iſrael*, and *Cozbi* a Woman of *principal Quality* among the *Midianites*, being hardned in their ſhameful Sin, and infatuated by their brutal Luſt, paſs along in the Sight of *Moſes* and the whole *Congregation* in the time of their Devotions, and even whilſt the *Peſtilence* raged in the Neighbourhood; to a Tent or Booth, which was to be the Scene of their unexampled *Lewdneſs*: preſuming perhaps that the Greatneſs of their *Quality* would be their Protection in their Sin. But *worthy Magiſtrates* are no *Reſpecters*

of

of Perſons; and *Vice* never looks with ſo ill a Face as when it corrupts the beſt *Character*. It was thus reſented by our *Righteous Phinehas* in the Text, whoſe Spirit was ſo grieved, wounded, and incenſed by this prodigious Villany, that (being authorized by *Moſes*, ver. 5.) he roſe up from his Devotions, and ſurprizing the ſcandalous Couple in their abominable Lewdneſs in the Tent, he ſtab'd them both thorow at one Stroke, and pinned them to the Earth with the *Javelin* which he carried with him for that purpoſe. And now, *Juſtice* being impartially *executed*, the Prayers of *Iſrael* appear to be in earneſt, and their Confeſſions of Sin to be ſincere: ſince they made the publick Examples of *Sin*, as publick Examples of *Puniſhment*.

And

And now God will ſtop their *Plagues*, and the Door of Mercy ſhall be opened again. *Then ſtood up Phinehas and executed Judgment, and ſo the Plague was ſtayed.*

Before I make any particular *Remarks* on theſe Words, it will be requiſite that I ſpeak ſomething to ſhew the *Suitableneſs* of them to the preſent Occaſion: which will need little more then to lay before you the Occaſion and Circumſtances of the Death of our *dear Brother*, whoſe Funeral we now celebrate, and whoſe Death we greatly lament; which was this.

Whereas the QUEEN (whom GOD long preſerve) has, by Her moſt *Excellent Proclamation*, (which is required to be publickly read both in our *Churches* and Places of *publick Judicature*) declared

declared Her ſerious and ſolemn Reſolution to diſcourage and ſuppreſs *Impiety* and *Immorality*; as the only means to ſecure the Bleſſing of Almighty *God*, and the publick Good of Her *Majeſty*'s Kingdoms: And hath therein, by Her Sacred Authority, required all *Officers* of the Peace, and others, to be very vigilant and careful to apprehend and bring to Juſtice all ſuch as offend againſt the good Laws of the Land by any *vicious* or *prophane* Practices: And whereas the Execution of this Her *Majeſty*'s pious Proclamation has been farther injoin'd and preſs'd upon *Inferior Officers* by Order of the *Juſtices of the Peace* for this County at their late Seſſions. Theſe authentick and awful Injunctions (which are enough to awaken any Man's Con-

Conſcience that is not utterly depraved or dead) excited the *chief Conſtable* of this Hundred to ſummons this honeſt Man, being in the Office of a *Conſtable*, together with ſeveral others of the ſame Office, to endeavour to ſuppreſs the ſcandalous *Lewdneſs* complained of at a neighbouring Fair. And as ſoon as they came thither, the very Face of *Authority* appeared ſo diſagreeable to guilty Perſons in a Time of their *Licentiouſneſs*, that ſome ill People preſently began a hideous Clamour againſt Reformation, raiſed a ſenſeleſs Mob, and at laſt animated a parcel of rude Soldiers to aſſault them: who too ſoon took the Alarm, and too barbarouſly put it in Execution; for in the End this our *Honoured Brother* was wounded, mangled, and

and ſlain: and many other *Officers* were repelled with ſundry Wounds and great Indignities; to the great Diſhonour of *Almighty God*, the perfect Outrage of *Magiſtracy*, and to a ſort of Inſult upon the *Queen's Majeſty*, in the Contempt of Her *Laws*, Her *Officers*, and *Orders*; and in perverting the End of Her Soldiers bearing Arms, which is for the *Defence* of the publick Peace and Safety; not for the *Diſturbance* and Invaſion of it. And may the juſt Reſentment and impartial Puniſhment of this *crying Villany*, by thoſe that have the *Sword of Juſtice* committed to them on Earth, be a Means to avert the conſuming Wrath of God, which muſt otherwiſe be expected from Heaven. For it was by the *Execution of Judgment* in the Text, *that the Plague was ſtayed.*

Our other *Tranſlation* renders it thus; *Then ſtood up Phinehas and prayed, and ſo the Plague ceaſed*: Which is according to the *Targum* and the *Syriack*. And the original Word ſometimes ſignifies to *Pray*, and ſometimes to *Judge*, according to the Acceptation of *Ancient Interpreters*; as indeed the *Judges* of *Iſrael* were uſually their *Advocates* with God. And in the Inſtance before us they both meet; for *Phinehas* roſe up from his Prayers to do *Juſtice*. And whereas his *Prayer* is mentioned after his riſing up, 'tis very probable, that he made ſome ſhort *Prayer* to God, to ſtrengthen him in this extraordinary Act of *Juſtice*, and to accept it; and then he went, and did it.

Now in ſome Things, the *Phinehas* in the Text, and the *Phi-*

nehas

nehas now to be interred, do very much agree. In the *first* Place, Both were *Magistrates*, and Both were *called* and *excited* to execute their Office by particular Commands from their *chief Governours*: For as *Moses* said to the *Judges of Israel*, *Slay you every one his Men that have joined themselves to Baal-Peor*, Numb. 25. 5. So has the pious *Proclamation* of *our most Gracious Queen* earnestly required Her *Officers* to put the Laws in Execution against *Vice* and *Impiety*.

Again, both the *Jewish Magistrate* in the Text, and the *Christian Magistrate* in the Case before us, rose up to oppose *Vice*, and seem'd to be animated with true *Zeal* for God, and with Indignation against the publick Contempt of his Laws. So that their

Cauſe, their *Authority*, and their *Motives*, ſeem to agree: and we hope that both of them did things equally agreeable to the Will of God: yea, we cannot reaſonably doubt it in the one, ſince God has openly declared it in the Caſe of the other, in the Words following the Text: *And this was counted to him for Righteouſneſs unto all Generations for evermore.* For as God honoured *Phinehas* with the *Prieſthood* and the continued Succeſſion of it for this noble piece of Juſtice; and as God was pleaſed to *ſtop the Plague* from this very time; ſo all Generations cannot but admire and extol the *worthy and ſeaſonable Zeal of Phinehas*; nor will ſuch as in legal and regular ways tread in his Steps be forgotten by thankful *Poſterity* whoſe true Intereſts they ſo ge-

nerouſly

nerouſly proſecute. And whereas it has pleaſed God to permit the *Worthy Officer* before us, to be ſlain by wicked Hands, in this Noble Act of his Zeal for his Name; let none think his Endeavours the leſs acceptable to God, but rather the more, in that he ſo ſoon took him to a *Reward* far ſurpaſſing all that could be given him upon Earth. Even as he did his *Martyr Steven*, in whoſe Foot-ſteps Our Dear Deceaſed *Brother* ſeem'd to tread; with him, and with his *ſacrificed Saviour*, praying for his *Murderers*. And when the Juſtice of our Nation ſhall have taken place, as far as may be, upon thoſe *Blood-guilty Men* that were the cauſe of his much lamented Death; we hope it may be matter of Comfort to us to conſider, That however

Impiety

Impiety abounds or has abounded amongſt us, we have yet (thro' God's Grace) ſome pious *Magiſtrates* and others, who are ready to lay down their *Lives* and ſacrifice their *All*, in Faithfulneſs to God and Zeal for his Name: O! may they, with *Phinehas* in the Text, be inſtrumental in *turning away the Wrath of God from us.*

We have ſome Reaſon to hope this, from the expreſs Approbation of *Phinehas*'s Juſtice from God himſelf, and his ſtoping the devouring *Plague* thereupon: in which we have good Ground for this *Obſervation.* viz.

That the impartial Execution of *Juſtice* upon *Scandalous Vice* and *Impiety*, is a thing very acceptable to God, and very conducive to the

the *Publick Good. Then ſtood up Phinehas and executed Judgment, and ſo the Plague was ſtay'd.* God was highly pleaſed with this ſeaſonable and affectionate *Zeal* of this Righteous Man: as we ſee it farther declared at large in the Hiſtory of it, (*Numb.* 25. 10, 11, 12, 13.) *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes, ſaying, Phinehas the Son of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron the Prieſt, hath turned away my Wrath from the Children of Iſrael, (while he was Zealous for my Sake among them) that I conſumed not the Children of Iſrael in my Jealouſie. Wherefore ſay, Behold I give unto him my Covenant of Peace. And he ſhall have it, and his Seed after him, even the Covenant of an Everlaſting Prieſthood, becauſe he was Zealous for his God, and made an Atonement for the Children of Iſrael.*

So

So that the Truth of the Doctrine is so very plain from the *Instance* in the Text, that it will not need many words to give farther Proof of it: But, alas! it is a Truth so much neglected in Practice, that there will be the more need of enlarging in the *Application*.

Briefly then, As to the acceptableness of the *Punishment of Vice and Prophaneness* in the Sight of God; It is evident,

I. From the very end for which *Magistracy* was instituted in the World by the *All-governing God*: which the Apostle expressly tells us, *is for the punishment of Evil-Doers, and for the praise of them that do well*, (1 Pet. 2. 14.) And for this Reason the *Magistrate* is honoured with the *Sacred Character*

racter of *God's Miniſter*, (Rom. 13. 4.) *For he is God's Miniſter, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doeth Evil.* In which, they act in Agreement with, and Subordination to, the *Kingdom* of God, and keep up the Honour and Regard due to his *Government* of the World. And for this Reaſon, no *Kingdom* or *State* that tolerates publick Wickedneſs, and takes no Care to puniſh it with becoming Strictneſs, can long proſper; any more than a Weapon formed againſt God can: For the Caſe is the ſame: and however vain Men ſeem to triumph in their Wickedneſs for a time, they will at laſt find, that God will bring the Wheel over them, and that his *Kingdom is an Everlaſting Kingdom*, and that *his Dominion cannot be ſhaken.*

II. *Piety* and *Virtue* were made eſſentially ſubordinate to the Happineſs of Men in the Laws of their Creation. Holineſs is *God's Image* upon us, and the very Foundation of God's Delight in us, and of our Delight in Him, and of our being capable of the Joys of Heaven. And the *Effacing* of Piety in Man's Nature by the Apoſtacy of our *Firſt Parents*, has been the Ruine of Mankind: And there is no way to regain the Hope of Eternal Life and Happineſs, but by our being *renewed after the Image of God in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs*, through the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, (*Eph.* 4. 24.) And therefore the *Chaſtiſing* of publick Offenders by the *Magiſtrate's* Power ſerves the grand Intereſt of Mankind.

III. We

III. We find in the *Hiſtories* of all Nations and Times, that the Height of Vice and Impiety has brought down direful Plagues, Deſolation and Deſtruction upon the People that abounded in it. The *Chronicles* of the Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah* verifie this Obſervation in every Page of them: And Sir *Walter Rawleigh*, *Comines*, and other *Hiſtorians* have obſerved, that all other Hiſtories are little more than Collections of other Inſtances which demonſtrate the ſame Thing. Yea, the whole Creation is a great *Syſtem* of like Inſtances in the ſeveral Parts of it. It was Impiety that turned *Legions of Angels* out of Heaven, and that caſt Men out of *Paradice*. Impiety has brought *Vanity*, *Decay*, and a *Curſe* upon

the Face of the Earth: It has been the Overthrow of *Cities*, *Countries*, *Kingdoms*, and *Empires*. Yea, it has deſtroyed one *World* already, and, by the abounding of it, we find, that the other is in its *laſt Days*.

IV. God has many times ſignally honoured ſuch as have appeared Eminent in doing *Juſtice* upon notorious Tranſgreſſors. As *Phinehas* and his *Poſterity* were exalted to the *High Prieſthood* for his Service herein; ſo the whole *Tribe* of *Levi* obtained ſingular Bleſſings for their impartial Juſtice upon their *neareſt Relations* that had offended in the Matter of the *Golden Calf*, (Exod. 32. 8.) And for this, *Moſes* particularly recommends them to God upon his Death-Bed, (*Deut.* 33. 8.) *And*

of

of Levi he ſaid, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy Holy One; who ſaid unto his Father, and to his Mother, I have not ſeen him; neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor know his own Children: for they obſerved thy Word, and kept thy Covenant: They ſhall teach Jacob thy Judgments, and Iſrael thy Law: They ſhall put Incenſe before thee, and whole Burnt-Sacrifice upon thine Altar. Bleſs, Lord, his Subſtance, and accept the Work of his Hands: Smite thorow the Loins of them that riſe againſt him, and of them that hate him, that they riſe not again. And we may obſerve, how the *Curſe* of God, denounced by their dying Father's Lips, (*Gen.* 49. 7.) that *they ſhould be ſcattered in Iſrael, and divided in Jacob*, was turned into a *Bleſſing*; for they were indeed ſcattered among the other

Tribes, but it was to be their *Spiritual Fathers*, *and* their *Guides* and *Directors*. And, on the contrary, when *Eli* ſpared his Sons in their *Impieties*, it proved the *Ruine* of himſelf and Family, (1 *Sam.* 2. 31.) I cannot ſtay to multiply other Inſtances, nor need I, ſince it is God's eſtabliſhed Rule, that he will *Honour them that honour him, and cauſe thoſe that deſpiſe him to be lightly eſteemed*, (1 Sam. 2. 30.)

V. Even the Obſervance of other parts of our *Religion*, whilſt we neglect to reform *Publick Impieties*, is unacceptable to God. Hereby the *Powerful Duty* of Prayer loſes its *Efficacy*, and 'tis not all the Appendages of *Faſtings*, *Confeſſions*, and *Auſterities*, that will make up the Defect. It was ſo in the Caſe before us; the whole

whole Congregation *faſted* and *prayed* before the Lord, beſeeching him to remove the *Peſtilence* from among them: but nothing availed, till *Phinehas ſtood up and executed Judgment*, as in the Text.

We find the ſame thing illuſtrated in the beginning of *Iſaiah*'s *Prophecy*, when great Corruptions and Impieties abounded in *Iſrael*; that the Spirit of God expreſſes Diſlike to the Obſervance of his own *Inſtitutions*; and tells them, that *their Incenſe was an Abomination*; *their Sabbaths and ſolemn Aſſemblies an Offence unto him*; and *their very treading his Courts a Thing that he could not bear*, (Iſa. 1. 11, 12.) But then he comes to ſet them right, (*Ver.* 16, 17.) *Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before your Eyes*; *Ceaſe*

Ceaſe to do Evil, Learn to do well, SEEK JUDGMENT, &c. And then it follows, *Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: Tho' your Sins were as Scarlet, they ſhall be white as Wool: tho' they were red as Crimſon, they ſhall be as white as Snow.*

Thus in the Caſe of *Achan*, (Joſh. 7. 10.) Tho' *Joſhua* and *the Elders rent their Cloths, and put Duſt on their Heads, and faſted and prayed before the Lord:* Yet God did not turn away his Wrath, till *Achan*, the great Offender, was brought to *Execution*: For God had expreſly told them the Neceſſity of this, (*Ver.* 12.) *I will be with you no more, except ye deſtroy the accurſed thing from among you.*

I pray God incline us to look well to this Matter, with reference to the *Solemn Faſt* that is ere long

o be obſerved throughout this Nation. May *impartial Juſtice* ſcatter thoſe *publick Sins*, which all devout Souls will then truly lament before God. And this leads me to the Application.

Infer. 1. From what has been ſaid, we may reaſonably conclude, That no *Church* or *State* can be bleſſed or ſafe, where *publick Sin* is uncurb'd and uncorrected. For, whereſoever Sin rages and prevails, God's Judgments are nigh at hand. And tho' *ſenſual Men*, take no Notice of Things out of the way of their *carnal Senſation*, 'tis otherwiſe with ſuch as fear God. They look with an awful Dread upon the *Divine Oracles*, the Holy Scriptures, and are ſure it cannot be well with Men, whilſt they are

threatned by God. This ſets them reſolutely to endeavour to remove the Cauſes of God's Diſpleaſure: and till we make publick Efforts of this Nature, we cannot expect publick Proſperity.

Would we pull down *Publick Enemies*, and be conſpicuous among the Nations? Would we ſucceed in our Councils, and in our Enterprizes by Sea and Land? Would we ſecure Peace, Commerce, Plenty, and Victory? Truly, we muſt then ceaſe our Fighting againſt God; and our *Magiſtrates*, who are *God's Miniſters*, muſt draw their *Swords* in God's Cauſe. O that the Spirit of *Righteous Phinehas* were more diffuſed among us; we abound with Inſtances which would provoke his Spirit, but we want his Zeal and Courage to ſuppreſs them

them: And till we attain this, we cannot in reaſon hope, that our *Plagues ſhould be ſtayed.* And therefore I infer in the *ſecond* place,

Infer. 2. That ſuch as bring Scandalous Offenders to *Juſtice*, are ſome of the greateſt Benefactors to Mankind. Theſe ſecure an Alliance with Heaven, and open the Doors of Divine Mercy and Benediction. But as for others, they are in open Hoſtility againſt their *Creator*, *Redeemer*, and *Sanctifier*: even the *cool Neuters* among the reſt, for God hath manifeſtly ſhew'd us, That *ſuch as are not for him, are againſt him,* (Matt. 12. 20.) So that he that does not *reprove*, *inform*, and do *Juſtice* upon Wickedneſs, according to his *Place*, *Power*, and *Capacity*, does manifeſtly *counte-*

nance, cheriſh, and *abet it,* in the Sight of God, and in the juſt Notions of his *infallible Oracles.* And this leads us to another Concluſion, *viz.*

Infer. 3. Then, ſuch as ſuffer for endeavouring to bring notorious Sinners to due Puniſhment in legal and prudential Methods do ſuffer for *Righteouſneſs ſake,* and will be rewarded of God for it. If they loſe their Lives in this Cauſe, they are *Martyrs* for God; for they lay down their Lives in *Obedience* to God's Will at his *Call,* and for his *Honour.* The Cauſe is God's, and the Diſpute is no leſs, than whether God or the Devil ſhall govern Men; and God will recompence the Wrong-ſufferings of his Servants who are faithful to his Intereſts

with infinite Remunerations. The Case of *Phinehas* in the Text makes it plain. This good *Magistrate* is commended and rewarded, even on Earth, by God for his *Justice* upon a Couple of Lewd Persons: because he rose up and slew them. Now, can you think that this Act of *Phinehas* had been less *virtuous* or *honourable*, if he had encountred with furious Bullies by the way, and had hazarded his *own Life*, before he could have done *Justice* upon others? No, the Action had been the more generous and heroic, and would have rendered him dearer to God and all good Men. Not that private Men are hereby impowered to slay an open Sinner, as the *Jewish Zealots* sometime argued from this Passage; nor that we may cut the

Throat

Throat of an Enemy to the Church of God, as the *Papiſts* argue; nor that the *Magiſtrate* himſelf may put an *Adulterer* to Death, if he finds him in the manner: but that he, and all others, ought to do what becomes their Place to put ſuch Offenders into the *Courſe of Juſtice* according to the Laws of the Land. And to ſuffer Death in ſo doing, is without doubt a very *glorious Martyrdom.* For who can with Reaſon make it a Queſtion, whether a Man may not as comfortably die, in endeavouring to retrieve the *Efficacy* and *Practice* of our Religion, in Oppoſition to *practical Atheiſts*, as in bearing Teſtimony to the *Truth* of it, in Oppoſition to *Pagan Idolaters*? Yea, the Glory of God and Good of Men ſeems rather to be chiefly con-

concerned in the former. For, as God is leſs diſhonoured where the *Chriſtian Religion* is never mentioned, than where it appears only to be *trampled* on and *reverſt*: ſo were it *better for Men never to have known the way of Righteouſneſs, then after they have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandment given unto them*, 2 Pet. 2. 21.

And from all theſe Concluſions it follows with great and undeniable Evidence,

Infer. 4. That the Oppoſers of Juſtice upon vicious and profligate Perſons, are ſome of the blackeſt and moſt barbarous of Tranſgreſſors. They ſtand in the firſt Ranks of the Troops of the *Prince of Darkneſs*, and attempt to overturn the very Foundations of *Piety* and *Juſtice*. It ſeems, ſuch

ſuch *Monſters* as theſe were not found in the *common Wealth of Iſrael.* When *Phinehas ſtood up to execute Judgment*, we don't find any *Son of Belial* ſo impudent and hardy in the Defence of Sin, as to ſtop his Hand, or hinder the Execution; much leſs to ſlay the *Magiſtrate*, in Protection to the *Criminal*: but, on the contrary, he ſeems to have the *Prayers* and the *Hearts* of all *Iſrael*, when he appears as a *Champion* for God againſt *Wickedneſs in High places.* And oh! that the Inſtance before us had been as void of unjuſt and unreaſonable Oppoſition. But Luſt is blind and violent; and we may as ſafely meet a *Bear bereaft of her Whelps*, as a furious Debauchee diſappointed of his Luſts. But the *Sons of Belial*, *as Thorns, muſt be handled with Inſtruments*

ments of Iron. The *Magiſtrate's Sword* may prove ſharper than theirs, or however, *the Righteous God loveth Righteouſneſs*, and *the Judge of all the Earth will do Right* to every one, whether he be of the Number of the *Oppreſſors*, or of the *Oppreſſed.*

I ſhall therefore now, in Concluſion, addreſs my ſelf to two ſorts of Perſons with reference to all that has been ſaid.

I. To ſuch as are not only backward in Oppoſing the *ſcandalous Vices* of Men, but full of ill Will againſt ſuch as do. Let me ask theſe Perſons a few Queſtions in the Preſence and Fear of God.

1. Do you not, as Men, acknowledge the *Being* and *Government* of a Righteous nad Holy

God? Does not his *Eternal Being* and *Godhead* clearly appear to our Reaſon from the Works of his Hands in the Heavens, and in the Earth, and Seas, and in every Place on which we caſt our Eye, or exerciſe our Thought? as St. *Paul* argues, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) For *the Inviſible Things of God from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, even his Eternal Power and Godhead: ſo that they* (the Heathen) *are without Excuſe.* And as He is a *Being* of all Perfection, the Attributes of *Righteouſneſs* and *Holineſs* muſt be his very *Eſſence* and *Nature.* And if ſo, in what a deplorable Caſe are all ungovernable and ungodly Men, who have, and daily do, ſtir up his Anger, and are every Moment obnoxious to his *Eternal Vengeance?*

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2. Do not these *Natural Notices* of *God* and *Sin* come with greater *Light* and *Power* upon us as *Christians*? Is not the *Wrath of God most clearly revealed from Heaven against all Unrighteousness of Men*, in the Gospel? (*Rom.* 1. 18.) And is not Sin represented there as the worst Evil that can befal any Person or Nation? And that, as it brings Plagues and Calamities on a sinful Nation, so it will assuredly expose the obstinate Sinner to the intolerable Gnawings of a *Worm that will never die*, and to the Scorchings of a vindictive *Fire that can never be quenched*?

3. Doth not our *holy Religion* suffer *Reproach* by reason of the Immoralities of such as bear the Name of *Christians*, but are of Pagan and Atheistical Lives and

Manners? Do not *Jews*, *Turks*, and *Pagans*, cry out againſt the Immoralities and Impieties of ſuch as bear the Name of *Chriſtians*? And will you not lend your Hand to wipe away the *Reproach of Iſrael*?

4. Have we not *Poſterity* to take Care of? Would you not willingly ſecure the Bleſſings of God to them, and the Comfort of a well-ordered State? Or can you bear the Thoughts of having your *Sons* and *Daughters* corrupted and rotted in Debauchery, and in the end deſtroyed by the *Juſtice of God* for ever?

5. Have you not a Dread of *National Judgments*? Would it not be dreadful, if thoſe Enemies of our Nation, which have been ſuch *bloody Scourges* to other People, ſhould be permitted, for our

Sins

Sins, to tread down us, and make us the Objects of their Scorn, Indignation, and Cruelty, in their *Galleys* or *Dungeons*; by their *Dragoons* or *Inquiſitions*, or the *Baſtonade*, and their numberleſs Methods of *unparallell'd Cruelties*?

And Laſtly, Have we not an *Immortal Crown* to win or loſe; as we overcome Sin, or are overcome by it? And after all theſe *Infinite Miſchiefs* of Sin and Wickedneſs, ſhall we think ſlightly of it, but be content to have it tolerated, and have little Value for the Means of removing it from us? If ſo, we are *twice dead, and pluckt up by the Roots*: the very Principles of *Morality*, as well as of *Chriſtianity*, are deſtroyed; and the diſmal *Event* can only inſtruct thoſe, who will not be *forewarned* of God's Righteous Judgments.

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But my laſt Application is to Perſons of better Underſtanding and better Hope, *viz.*

II. To ſuch as ſet themſelves, in the Fear of God, to redreſs *publick Enormities* according to the Laws of God and Man. You are certainly engaged, *my Honoured Brethren*, in one of the moſt *neceſſary* and moſt *glorious* Works upon Earth: If any of the *Patriarchs or Prophets*, the *Evangeliſts or Apoſtles*, were now upon Earth, they would join their Hands and Hearts with you, and, if neceſſary, would expend their *Blood* in the Service of this *divine Work*. And, bleſſed be God, you have the Authority of our good *Laws*, the Aſſurance of Protection and Encouragement from our *Illuſtrious* QUEEN: And not only

only the Prayers of good People, but God himſelf is on your ſide. *Be ſtrong* therefore, *and of good Courage.* If there were no Difficulty in the *Battle*, where would be the Honour of the *Victory*, or the Glory of the *Triumph?* 'Tis true, you have ſuffered *Reproach* from ill Men, but that's your *Honour.* You have alſo encountered various other Difficulties, but the *Funeral* now before us is one of the firſt Inſtances of your *Suffering unto Blood in your Strife againſt Sin*; I mean, unto *Death*: for I know that ſeveral of you have been wounded, and loſt your Blood in this Cauſe, by a ſort of *living Martyrdom.* But let none of theſe Things move you; it was neceſſary that your Love to God and Religion ſhould be thus ſignalized to the World, and

that

that all Men ſhould ſee, that you are not led to this Work by *worldly Motives*. And ſince your *Cauſe* is good, and your *Methods* regular and Chriſtian, you will not loſe your *Reward*.

Let this ſtop all Tears and Laments upon the account of the *worthy Officer* deceaſed; he has honourably laid down that Life for Chriſt's Sake, which muſt otherwiſe have been ſoon ſurrendred to ſome Diſeaſe, or ſome other Meſſenger of Death: and ſuch as ſuffer for Righteouſneſs ſake are required to *rejoice* and to *be exceeding glad*, (Matt. 5. 11, 12.) *becauſe their Reward is great in Heaven*. And indeed, ſince there appeared ſuch Comfort and Satisfaction in our deceaſed Brother's Conſcience, in his dying Hours

in the Senſe of his dying in his Duty, and for it; Why ſhould not we rejoice with him?

Phinehas indeed is dead, but the God of *Phinehas* reigns ſtill, and will reign for evermore. And he will ſurely *wipe away the Tears* of the Mourners for Sin, and *bind up the Wounds* of ſuch as ſuffer in the neceſſary Conteſts with it, and will *clear their good Name as the Noon-day.* That *Glorious Work* of Reformation, which is now rail'd upon by diſtemper'd People, will at laſt be commended by God himſelf; and your *Wounds* and *Scars* will appear with particular Honour, as thoſe acquired in *Battle*; and *Virtue* will appear with a glorious Face at laſt, when *Vice* will ſeek to hide its Shame under the Rocks and Mountains.

For, *Virtue and Piety* have no Enemies in the other World: but there the holy Angels with joyful Shouts will celebrate the *Triumphs* of thoſe who, like them, have vanquiſh'd the *Dragon and his Angels.*

Wherefore let this bleſſed Hope chear you under your preſent Hardſhips, and be ſure that ye *grow not weary, nor faint in your Minds: in time ye ſhall reap, if ye faint not.* For, ſuch as with *Phinehas* have removed the *Plagues* of God on Earth, will, through the Mercy of God, attain his Everlaſting Bleſſing: *Which God Almighty grant, for the Sake of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom with the Father, and the Eternal Spirit, be all Bleſſing, Honour, Glory and Power, aſcribed evermore.* Amen.

FINIS.